AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following is the status of the claims of the above-captioned application, as amended.

Claims 1-42 (Canceled).

Claim 43 (Currently amended). ~~A~~An isolated mutant host cell of a parent ~~*Bacillus licheniformis* mutant host cell derived from a parent *B.*~~*Bacillus licheniformis* host cell, which mutant host cell comprises a mutation in a gene encoding a secreted polypeptide which has an amino acid sequence which is at least ~~90~~95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 134, wherein the mutant host cell secretes at least 5% less of the secreted polypeptide than the parent host cell when they are cultivated under comparable conditions.

Claim 44 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 43 which is mutated by a partial or complete deletion of the gene.

Claim 45 (Currently amended). The host cell of claim 43, wherein the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence which is at least ~~95~~96% identical to SEQ ID NO: 134.

Claim 46 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 43, wherein the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence which is at least 97% identical to SEQ ID NO: 134.

Claim 47 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 43, which further comprises a mutation in a second gene encoding a second secreted polypeptide.

Claim 48 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 43, which comprises one or more heterologous gene(s) encoding one or more heterologous polypeptide(s).

Claim 49 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous gene(s) are present in at least two copies.

Claim 50 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous gene(s) are stably integrated into the genome of the cell.

Claim 51 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous gene(s) are integrated into the genome of the cell without leaving any antibiotic resistance marker genes at the site of integration.

Claim 52 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous gene(s) are transcribed from a heterologous promoter or from an artificial promoter.

Claim 53 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous gene(s) are comprised in an operon.

Claim 54 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous polypeptide(s) are antimicrobial peptides and/or fusion peptides comprising a peptide which in its native form has antimicrobial activity.

Claim 55 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous polypeptide(s) have biosynthetic activity and produce a compound or an intermediate of interest.

Claim 56 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 55, wherein the compound or intermediate of interest comprises vitamins, amino acids, antibiotics, carbohydrates, or surfactants.

Claim 57 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 56, wherein the carbohydrates comprise hyaluronic acid.

Claim 58 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 48, wherein the heterologous polypeptide(s) are enzymes.

Claim 59 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 58, wherein the enzyme is an enzyme of a class selected from the group of enzyme classes consisting of oxidoreductases (EC 1), transferases (EC 2), hydrolases (EC 3), lyases (EC 4), isomerases (EC 5), and ligases (EC 6).

Claim 60 (Previously presented). The host cell of claim 59, wherein the enzyme is an amylase or a mannanase.

Claim 61 (Previously presented). A process for producing at least one product of interest, comprising cultivating the *B. licheniformis* mutant host cell of claim 43 in a suitable medium for production of the at least one product.

Claim 62 (Previously presented). The process of claim 61, further comprising isolating or purifying the at least one product of interest.

Claim 63 (New). The host cell of claim 43 which is mutated by a complete deletion of the gene.